

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 EB-04 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 ACDA-05

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R 291700Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6071

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 7811

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, EAIR, GR, TU, GW

SUBJ: INTERRUPTION OF AIR TRAFFIC IN AEGEAN AND
STATUS OF WEST BERLIN

REFS: (A) ATHENS 6842; (B) BONN 13835; (C) USDAO
ATHENS 231245Z OCT 74

MILITARY ADDEES ALSO FOR POLADS

SUMMARY: EARLY AUGUST ISSUANCE BY GOT OF NOTAM ATTEMPT-
ING TO EXTEND TURKISH AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TO MID-AEGEAN
STIMULATED GOG ISSUANCE OF NOTAM CONTRADICTING TURKISH
NOTAM, LEADING TO VIRTUAL PARALYSIS OVER PAST THREE
MONTHS OF TRANS-AEGEAN MILITARY AND CIVIL FLIGHTS. FRG
HAS AT LEAST TWICE EXPRESSED CONCERN TO GOG THAT THIS
IMPASSE CAUSES FLIGHTS CARRYING TURKISH WORKERS FROM
BERLIN TO ISTANBUL TO TRANSIT BULGARIA, WHICH IMPOSES CONDITIONS
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DETRIMENTAL TO WESTERN POSITION IN BERLIN.

NEED TO ALLEVIATE IMPASSE ON TRANS-AEGEAN FLIGHTS AS CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVEMENT OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS IS REINFORCED BY BERLIN CONSIDERATION, AS WELL AS BY CONTINUING PROBLEMS CAUSED FOR CIVIL AVIATION AND US MILITARY FLIGHTS. WE BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO INDUCE GOT TO WITHDRAW ITS NOTAM AND SUBSEQUENTLY ON GOG TO REOPEN AIR CORRIDOR TO TURKEY. END SUMMARY

1. ON AUGUST 6 GOT ISSUED NOTICE TO AIRMEN (NOTAM) 714 REQUIRING THAT ALL AIRCRAFT TRANSITING EASTERN HALF OF AEGEAN AND SUBSTANTIAL SLICE OF NORTHEASTERN MEDITERRANEAN DO SO UNDER CONTROL OF TURKISH AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTERS RATHER THAN ATHENS AND NICOSIA ATC'S. APPARENT RATIONALE WAS GOT DESIRE TO CREATE AIR DEFENCE INFORMATION ZONE (ADIZ) ANALOGOUS TO NORTH AMERICAN ADIZ, A DESIRE STEMMING FROM SITUATION IN WHICH ATHENS FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (FIR) EXTENDED VIRTUALLY TO TURKISH AEGEAN COAST THUS GIVING NO WARNING OF POTENTIAL PENETRATIONS UNTIL TURKISH AIRSPACE ENTERED. GOG REACTED BY ISSUING NOTAM 1018 ON AUGUST 9 WHICH DECLARED TURKISH NOTAM INVALID.

2. COMPETING CLAIMS FOR CONTROL OF AIRSPACE OVER AEGEAN THEN LED TO VIRTUAL PARALYSIS OF TRANS-AEGEAN FLIGHT ACTIVITY, MILITARY AND CIVIL, ALTHOUGH OLYMPIC AIRLINES AND OTHER GREEK FLIGHTS TO EASTERN AEGEAN GREEK ISLANDS CONTINUE AS GOG IGNORES TURKISH ATTEMPT TO EXTEND ITS FLIGHT CONTROL AREA. U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT INITIALLY ATTEMPTED TO COMPLY WITH BOTH GREEK AND TURKISH REQUIREMENTS BUT TO NO AVAIL, AND US MILITARY FLIGHTS NOW TRANSIT BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES ONLY BY LOOPING SOUTH OF AREA IN QUESTION. INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION FLIGHTS STILL ARE NOT OPERATING DIRECTLY BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY.

3. IN RECENT MEETING WITH DCM, FONOFF DIRGEN OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TZOUNIS, MENTIONED THAT FRG AMBASSADOR ONCKEN HAD SEEN HIM OCTOBER 25 IN FURTHER EFFORT (SEE REF B) TO GET GOG TO OPEN THESSALONIKI-ISTANBUL AIR CORRIDOR (G-12) TO FLIGHTS ORIGINATING IN WEST BERLIN. TZOUNIS SAID ONCKEN HAD EXPLAINED THAT BULGARIANS STILL WOULD NOT ALLOW TRANSITS OF FLIGHTS ORIGINATING IN WEST BERLIN
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UNLESS THEY MADE INTERMEDIATE STOP IN FRG, AND GOB ALSO REQUIRED CLEARANCE REQUEST AT LEAST SEVEN DAYS IN ADVANCE.

ONCKEN SUPPORTED FRG REQUEST BY POINTING OUT IMPORTANCE TO ALLIANCE OF CHANNELING TRAVEL OF 160,000 TURKISH WORKERS RESIDENT THERE THROUGH WEST BERLIN RATHER THAN EAST GERMAN AIRFIELDS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN STATUS OF WEST BERLIN. TZOUNIS INDICATED THAT GOG REGARDS GOT EFFORT TO EXTEND

ITS AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AUTHORITY TO MID-AEGEAN AS DIRECTLY TIED IN WITH TURKISH CLAIMS TO PART OF AEGEAN SEABED AND WITH WHAT GOG REGARDS AS LONGER TERM TURKISH AMBITION TO ABSORB ISLANDS OF EASTERN AEGEAN. IN LIGHT OF THIS ANALYSIS, TZOUNIS INFORMED ONCKEN THAT GOG WOULD NOT OPEN THESSALONIKI-ISTANBUL CORRIDOR UNLESS GOT FIRST CANCELED ITS NOTAM 714, EVEN THOUGH THIS CORRIDOR SKIRTS RATHER THAN PASSING THROUGH AREA IN QUESTION.

4. GOG CLEARLY REGARDS ITS ABILITY TO DENY PERMISSION FOR FLIGHTS TO TRANSIT BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY AS LEVERAGE TO INDUCE GOT TO RETURN TO STATUS QUO ANTE. SINCE FLIGHTS TO AND FROM WEST ARE OF GREATER IMPORTANCE TO GREECE THAN THOSE CONNECTING GREECE WITH EAST, MOST OF WHICH CAN IN ANY EVENT BE DIVERTED THROUGH BEIRUT, CONTINUED IMPASSE APPEARS TO BE MORE INJURIOUS TO TURKISH THAN GREEK INTERESTS. ADDITIONAL COMPLICATION OF FLIGHTS TO TURKEY FROM BERLIN, AS WELL AS SUBSTANTIAL INCONVENIENCE TO US MILITARY AIR TRAFFIC OF CLOSURE OF AEGEAN, SUGGEST THAT WE CONSIDER MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE NOT ONLY TO BRING ABOUT SIGNIFICANT NORMALIZATION OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP BUT IN TERMS OF UNILATERAL US AND LARGER ALLIANCE INTERESTS.

5. WHILE MOST LOGICAL CONTEXT IN WHICH TO RESOLVE PROBLEM WOULD BE DIRECT GREEK-TURKISH TALKS GROWING OUT OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT, THIS APPROACH COULD BE TIME-CONSUMING AND MIGHT INADEQUATELY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THIRD-PARTY INTERESTS SUCH AS THOSE OF FRG AND OURSELVES. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE DEPT SHOULD CONSIDER ADVISABILITY OF APPROACH TO GOT SEEKING WITHDRAWAL OF NOTAM 714, FOLLOWED BY SIMILAR APPROACH TO GOG FOR WITHDRAWAL OF NOTAM 1018.

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